Establishment of National Biological Resource Authority

2525. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Gene Campaign and the Forum for Bio-technology have prepard a model Bill, providing for establishment ofsovereign rights over biological resources and submitted the same to Government;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to enact a legislation for establishing National Biological Resource Authority; and

(c) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. The Ministry of Environment and Forests is preparing a national legislation on biodiversity to regulate access to genetic material of the country. The proposed legislation *inter alia* provides for setting up of a National Authority. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has set up a Committee of Experts for Biodiversity Legislation under the chairmanship of Prof. M. S. Swaminathan.

Need of Privacy in Rural Health Centres

2526. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that woman in rural areas who are to confide about their health problems, need some privacy but are unable to do so because most of the health centres in rural areas function from a single room which is shared by a single male doctor and patients waiting for their turn; and

(b) if so, what remedial measures Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) The Government is aware of the infrastructural gaps and manpower shortage in primary health care in the rural areas.

(b) The State Governments are expected to use Minimum Needs Programme funds from their State plan allocation for filling infrastructural gaps in the primary health care network.

Suchgaps in the primary health care infrastructure have also been identified as one of the priority areas for investment of additional Central Plan assistance towards the Basic Minimum Services Programme.

Various externally aided projects are under implementation in many States with fund support for improvement of infrastructure as delivery of services at the primary health care level.

Recognition of Medical Degrees of foreign Universities

2527. SHRI SHIV CHARAN SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 23 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 24th July, 1997 and State:

(a) what are the details of foreign universities, the MBBS and equivalent degrees of which have been recognised by the Indian Universities, for higher studies and practice in India, as on date; and

(b) whether this has been done on reciprocity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) The details of MBBS and equivalent foreign medical qualifications recognised for practice of medicine in India are included in the Second Schedule and Part II of the Third Schedule to Indian Medical Council Act, 1956. The Schedule to I.M.C. Act, 1956 is a priced publication and is available for sale in the office of Medical Council of India at Aiwan-E-Galib Marg, Kotla Road, New Delhi. Section 12 of the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 provides for establishment of a scheme